Appomattox Children's Center

O'Donnells are ideal day-care owners

Merle and Brian O'Donnel are perhaps the ideal day-care center owners. Their lives have been devoted to rearing six children of their own, and they have also helped rear six foster children in their home.

Their love for little people is evident, and their enthusiasm for little people is stronger now than ever.

The O'Donnells purchased the Appomattox Day Care Center from Ruth Cole in January of 1981.

"We love children," says Merle. "We had been talking about owning a children's center since we moved here (from Long Island, N.Y.) in 1978." When the O'Donnells learned that Mrs. Cole was interested in selling her day-care business, they contacted her, and after brief negotiations, purchased the business, including 17 full-time day care children and five part-time children.

"The center has certainly grown since we bought it," comments Mrs. O'Donnell. The business was re-named Appomattox Children's Center and moved to a new building on Route 460 west of Appomattox after the O'Donnells took over. They currently have 34 pre-school children and 14 after-school children.

Appropriately, one of the O'Donnells' own children, Regena, set up the center and ran it for a brief period before moving with her husband back to Richmond.

The center's current director, Patricia Gaines, notes that contrary to popular belief, day-care centers represent more that elaborate baby-sitting facilities. A carefully planned educational program is used at the Appomattox Children's Center.

"We use the 'Create-a-Craft' curriculum, which is written by educators with degrees in early childhood education," says Patricia. "It is a three-year program which offers a different educational theme each month. For example, during March, the theme at the center was 'Fun on the Farm.' The children's activities – art work, crafts, music, rhythms, finger plays and other creative endeavors – were related with learning about rural life."

Patricia and the other

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APPOMATTOX CHILDREN'S CENTER

For Information
On Enrollment, Please
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PICTURED ABOVE, front row, left to right: Jamie Lewis, Shannon Jamerson, Bennie Bryant, Joey Womack, Heidi Bowman, Sarah Blanks; second row, left to right, Kristen Kramer, Ginger Bryant, Shane Mann, Jason Garrett, Dana Doss; Back row, left to right—Miss Eileen O'Donnell, Mrs. Lisa Kerr and Miss Melissa Randolph.

LOTS OF LOVE & LEARNING!

PICTURED ABOVE: (left to right, seated) Heather Heitkamper, Chassity Hendricks, Mary Blue, Kristy Page, Felicia Williams, Hannah Jones (standing, back row) Faber Jamerson, Kenny Deaner, Greg Elliott, Shannon Lewis, Wesley Goin, Chip Bass, Chad Crain and Nick Dillon. (Teacher, not pictured) Mrs. Vanessa Clifton. Children (not pictured) Bennie Bryant, Joey Womack, Molly Griffith.

PICTURED ABOVE: (left to right, seated) Chrysti Frazier, Missy Garrett, Robin Davis, Jenny Beamon, Dana Bryant, Kristi Guthrie (standing, back row) Brandon Austin, Christiaan Gosey, Jamie McCormick, Randy Fleshman, Seth Wilkerson and Adam Morris (teacher, not pictured) Mrs. Lisa Kerr, (children, not pictured) Sarah Blanks, Dana Carter, Amber Liccini, Allison Goin and Dustin Brandt.

Business now carries copy machines

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Whatever is needed for your office, they have it. From pencils, and pens, desks and charis, paper by the pack or case, and the Gestetner 2001, The Carefree Plain Paper Copier..... it's all there at Appomattox Office Supplies. Inc., located in the lower level of the Times-Virginian newspaper building.

Owned and operated by Lloyd and Sarah Vaughan, their son, Bill, and assisted by Mrs. Carole Abernathy, Appomattox Office Supplies, Inc., offers name brand office upplies at prices comparable to any you'll find anywhere. Items not in stock are ordered for you with only a day or so to wait.

The business began as a 'side line', so to speak, when Vaughan was Editor and Publisher of the Times-Virginian. The office supply business was located in the front office of the newspaper building.

As the demand for office supplies grew, Vaughan added shelves and increased his stock until there was no more space.

With the business growing daily, Vaughan moved the office supplies downstairs in October of 1979 to the lower level of the building and added even more lines to the already well-stocked office supply store.

In January of 1980, the business became Appomattox Office Supplies, Inc.

With more space, Vaughan was now able to handle and have on display office furniture. Included in stock is office furniture by Hon, Cole, Art Steel, Miller, United Chair, High Point and others.

A complete line of bookkeeping supplies includes Wilson Jones, National, Oxford and other name brand lines.

In January of 1980 Vaughan sold the newspaper to Atlantic Publications Inc., with headquarters in Accomac. Vaughan now works full time with Appomattox Office Supplies Inc.; his wife works part-time for the newspaper and part-time with her husband in the family business.

Bill Vaughan, who is active in the office supply business with his parents is a graduate of Appomattox County High School. He attended Ferrum College and Central Virginia Community College.

Appomattox Office Supplies, Inc., a family business with a personal interest in their customers, and a top line of office supplies.

Center fills special need locally

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instructors at the center are well qualified for their work. Patricia has a B.S. degree in Early Childhood Education, and has also taken graduate courses at Wayne State University in Detroit and educational courses at Longwood College. She has a permanent Michigan teaching certificate and also holds a Virginia Collegiate Teaching certificate.

While living in Michigan she taught kindergarten and second grade in the Detroit Public School System.

Patricia is assisted at the center by Lisa Kerr, who teaches the class for two- and three-year-old children, and Vanessa Clifton, who teaches the four- and five-year-old children.

All of the teachers, as well as Mr. and Mrs. O'Donnell, attend college workshops to keep up with the latest methods in Early Childhood Education.

Also, speakers in the field of Early Childhood Education are hired from time to time to address the staff at the center on subjects related to the children's care.

"We're like the children's mother away from home, so we give them lots of love and attention," says Patricia. She adds that the children are not "pushed" in the educational programs. "Instead, we try to meet the individual needs of each child and they progress at their own rate." Patricia notes.

"Our program is based on a firm belief in the maturation process of each child," Patricia continues. "Our main goal is for our children to be socially and emotionally well adjusted."

Studies indicate that children who attend day care centers are, as a rule, more independent and adaptable to new surroundings by the time they enter public school.

The center itself is a modern facility conveniently located just outside the Appomattox town limits on Route 460 West. There are educational toys in the building for the children to play with, and a playground behind the center where the children get plenty of exercise.

Jean Garrison and Shirley Scruggs prepare breakfast and hot lunches for the children at the center.

Also on the staff are the following teacher aides: Robin Goin, Ara Haskins and Barbara Randolph.

"One of the programs we are expanding now is the after-school program," says Mrs. O'Donnell. "We have found a real need in the community for the after-school service, and are currently developing an enrichment program to fill that need." The teachers of the after-school program are Eileen O'Donnell and Melissa Randolph.

Merle says she is particularly proud of the staff at the Children's Center. "Those people are all very special," she says. "They have to be. They have the inate ability to work with children....to let them be free, and at the same time teach them things which will enable them to function in the social environment they'll encounter in school, and throughout the rest of their lives."

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STANDING, from left to right, are Mrs. Carole Abernathy, Sarah Vaughan, Bill Vaughan and Lloyd Vaughan.

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